TED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1945
28 July 1995

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council extends UNIFIL mandate for six months; urges parties in southern Lebanon to put end to acts of violence against Force.

* Under-Secretary-General Annan and General Janvier report extremely positive talks with NATO regarding use of air power in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* UNCRO expresses alarm at Croatian troop build-up in Bosnia and Herzegovina; fears military action in Croatia within days.

* Secretary-General recommends Security Council extend UNMIH mandate through February 1996; says Haiti should have elected institutions and functioning security system by then.

* Special Representative for Tajikistan to hold consultations on comprehensive political settlement in Moscow and Dushanbe.

* High Commissioner for Human Rights expresses regret at resignation of Tadeusz Mazowiecki as Special Rapporteur for former Yugoslavia.

* Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination to hold forty-seventh session in Geneva from 31 July to 18 August.

* UNIFEM Director to light peace torch in Durban on Pan-African Women's Day.

* * *

The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for six months to 31 January 1996. The Council condemned the increase in acts of violence against the Force and urged the parties in southern Lebanon to put an end to them. It took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 1,006 (1995).

For information media—not an official record

The Council concurred with the Secretary-General's decision to streamline UNIFIL, stressing that the 10 per cent in the Force's strength would not affect its operational capacity. It requested him to continue consultations with the Lebanese Government and other parties concerned with the implementation of today's resolution and to report thereon.

In a complementary statement by President Delmer Urbizo Panting (Honduras), the Council reaffirmed its commitment to Lebanon's full sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity within its internationally recognized boundaries. In that context, it asserted that any State shall refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

The Council stressed the urgent need for the implementation of resolution 425 (1978) in all its aspects. It reiterated its full support for the Taif Agreement and for the Lebanese Government's efforts to consolidate peace, national unity and security, while successfully carrying out the reconstruction process. The Council expressed concern over the continuing violence in southern Lebanon and regret at the loss of civilian life, and urged all parties to exercise restraint.

* * *

The Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, Kofi Annan, and the Commander of United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF), General Bernard Janvier, today had "extremely positive" talks with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) regarding the use of air power in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They discussed operational modalities for implementing the North Atlantic Council's decision that a Bosnian Serb attack on Gorazde should be met by a firm and decisive response.

Mr. Annan told correspondent in Brussels that discussions would now continue at the military levels between the United Nations and NATO commanders directly concerned. "I leave Brussels with a renewed sense of partnership with NATO in pursuing our common endeavours, which aim to fulfil the international community's objective of a peaceful and durable settlement of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina," he said. He added that peace-keeping was not an end in itself -- peace-keepers offered space and time for negotiations to move the diplomatic process forward.

* * *

The United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) today expressed alarm at a Croatian build-up of 8,000 to 10,000 troops in the Livno area of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It could not confirm reports that the town of Bosanska Grahovo had fallen to the Croatian forces, cutting off the main supply road linking Knin to Bosnian Serb territory. Some 5,000 Serb civilians were said to be fleeing north from the conflict area.

(more)

UNCRO also voiced fears that military action might be initiated in Croatia itself within days. It said that the Croatian Army had been highly active in Sector North and that local Serbs were mobilizing. Troops were also being concentrated and mobilized in Sector South.

Meanwhile, the evacuation of over 4,000 civilians from Zepa was completed yesterday, according to UNPROFOR. Negotiations between the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serbs on an "all for all" exchange of prisoners ended early this morning without any agreement, but resumed later in the day. There was intense shelling on the northern confrontation line of the Bihac pocket, while there were moderate levels of activity in Sarajevo. A French peace-keeper was wounded when his observation post was hit by a tank round during a firefight south of the Bosnian capital.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the Security Council extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) until the end of February 1996. Security Council resolution 940 (1994) established the objective of completing the Mission's mandate by that time.

In a report dated 24 July, the Secretary-General said UNMIH had made significant progress towards achieving its goals since taking over from the Multinational Force. It should be able to maintain a secure and stable environment throughout the current election period and the forthcoming election presidential elections, he continued. It was reasonable to hope that Haiti would have duly elected institutions and a functioning security system by February 1996.

The Secretary-General expressed the hope that all concerned in Haiti would draw on the experience of the June legislative and local elections and correct organizational mistakes and shortcomings in the election process. It was imperative that that process lead to a stable transition to a newly elected Government. He also appealed for contributions to the voluntary fund to support the international police monitoring programme and assist with the creation of an adequate police force in Haiti.

* * *

The Special Representative for Tajikistan, Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, left today to undertake consultations in Moscow and Dushanbe as well as in a number of regional countries. Those consultations, which will take place until the middle of August, are in pursuance of his continuing efforts to achieve a comprehensive political settlement to the conflict in Tajikistan through the promotion of inter-Tajik negotiations.

* * *

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala Lasso, today expressed regret at the resignation of Tadeusz Mazowiecki as Special Rapporteur on human rights in the former Yugoslavia. He expressed his gratitude to Mr. Mazowiecki for his valuable contribution to the United

Nations effort to protect human rights in the region. The international community should reflect on Mr. Mazowiecki's comments related to the concept of the Special Rapporteur's mandate, he added.

* * *

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will hold its forty-seventh session in Geneva from 31 July to 18 August. The 18-member Committee will consider the measures taken by Chad, Belarus, Mexico, New Zealand, El Salvador, Nicaragua, United Arab Emirates and Nigeria to combat racial discrimination. Those countries are among the 143 States parties to the 1969 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

* * *

A peace torch will be lit in Durban, South Africa, on 31 July and then carried through African countries affected by war to Beijing, site of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The torch will be lit by the Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on the occasion of Pan-African Women's Day, a day dedicated to peace throughout the world.

* *** *